

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-01

TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 L-03 H-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01

DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 PM-04 ACDA-05 SAJ-01

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P R 121621Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7776

INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

ALL EC CAPITALS 0019

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 04343

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, FR

SUBJECT: DIRECTORATE FOR THE EC?

REF: (A) PARIS 2523, (B) PARIS 3070

1. SUMMARY: GISCARD HAS LAUNCHED TRIAL BALLOON CONCERN-
ING "DIRECTORATE" TO GUIDE EC. THIS RECALLS EARLIER
FRENCH EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH FAVORED INSTITUTIONAL ROLE
IN WORLD AFFAIRS AND RAISES QUESTION OF FUTURE ROLE FOR
FRENCH-INSPIRED EUROPEAN COUNCIL AS MAIN EXECUTIVE BODY
OF EC. IT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT GISCARD'S REACTION TO
TINDEMANS REPORT'S TREATMENT OF EC EXECUTIVE IS
ESSENTIALLY NEGATIVE. END SUMMARY

2. MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9 SAW LAND-SLIDE PRODUCTION BY
FRENCH PRESS OF ARTICLES WITH SAME BASIC THEME: NEED
TO RE-ENFORCE EXECUTIVE POWER OF EC ALONG LINES OF
SMALL CONFEDERAL EXECUTIVE "DIRECTORATE" RATHER THAN
STRONGER EC COMMISSION. LE MONDE ARTICLE BY MAURICE
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DELARUE, L'AUREOLE ARTICLE BY ROLAND FAURE, L'EXPRESS

PIECE BY CLAUDE IMBERT AND REUTERS DISPATCH (COPIES OF EACH POUCHED EUR/RPE AND USEC) ARE FEW EXAMPLES. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT LUNCHEON BACKGROUNDER BY GISCARD FOR SEVERAL JOURNALISTS -- INCLUDING DELARUE -- ON FEBRUARY 5 PRECIPITATED PRESS FLOOD. MOST EYE-CATCHING IDEA SURFACED BY GISCARD AND WIDELY REPORTED IN FRENCH PRESS WAS HINT THAT FRANCE MAY TRY TO REVIVE IDEA OF RESTRICTED "DIRECTORATE" OF THREE OR FOUR EUROPEAN NATIONS TO GUIDE COMMON MARKET. SAME PRESS REPORTS SUGGEST THAT FRENCH ARE NOT ATTRACTED TO THRUST OF TINDEMANS PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING EC EXECUTIVE. PRESS ARTICLES SPEAK OF TWO BASIC OPTIONS FOR EUROPEAN "DIRECTORATE": FIRST WOULD BE LIMITED TO FRANCE, GERMANY AND GREAT BRITAIN, AND PERHAPS ITALY; SECOND WOULD SEE THESE MAJOR POWERS JOINED BY ONE OR TWO PARTICULARLY OUTSTANDING REPRESENTATIVES OF SMALLER COUNTRIES (E.G., THORN OF LUXEMBOURG WHO WAS PROMINENTLY MENTIONED IN SEVERAL PRESS ARTICLES).

3. GISCARD'S "DIRECTORATE" TRIAL BALLOON WAS BOUND TO ATTRACT WIDE-SPREAD ATTENTION AND TO RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS COMPATIBILITY WITH EARLIER EMPHASIS OF GISCARD ON DEVELOPING THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AS FOCAL POINT FOR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP WITHIN EC. AN ELYSEE SPOKESMAN TOLD PRESS AT NICE (WHERE GISCARD IS MEETING WITH SCHMIDT TODAY AND TOMORROW) ON FEBRUARY 11 THAT FRANCE BELIEVES DECISIONS ON COHESION OF COMMUNITY SHOULD ESSENTIALLY BE MADE IN EUROPEAN COUNCIL. SPOKESMAN CONTINUED THAT EUROPEAN COUNCIL HAD PROVED ITS WORTH.

4. COMMENT: WE REPORTED IN REFTELS THAT FRENCH HAVE PROBLEMS WITH WHOLE QUESTION OF FUTURE OF EC EXECUTIVE POWER AS DESCRIBED IN TINDEMANS REPORT. FRENCH FEEL THAT TINDEMANS REPORT TENDS TO GIVE TOO MUCH WEIGHT TO EC COMMISSION AS FOCAL POINT FOR EC EXECUTIVE POWER. FRENCH PREFER THAT NATIONS -- ESPECIALLY FRANCE -- RETAIN TIGHT CONTROL OVER EUROPE'S EXECUTIVE POWER. FRENCH AND TINDEMANS SEEM TO AGREE, HOWEVER, THAT AN EC OF NINE -- AND EVEN MORE SO AN EC OF TEN, ELEVEN OR

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TWELVE -- NATIONS WILL REQUIRE STRENGTHENED EXECUTIVE INSTITUTIONS. FRENCH PREFERENCE IN PAST HAS BEEN TO PUSH EUROPEAN COUNCIL -- MEETING AT HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AND CHIEFS OF STATE LEVEL -- AS THE COMMANDING EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY. PRESS ARTICLES SUGGEST THAT GISCARD IS NOW CONCERNED THAT AN ENLARGED EC SIMPLY CANNOT BE GUIDED BY PERIODIC EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETINGS ALONE. CONSEQUENTLY, SOME OTHER MECHANISM NEEDS TO BE FOUND TO GIVE

TO THE EC THE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP THAT IT REQUIRES
WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME SEPARATING THAT LEADERSHIP
FROM NATIONAL CAPITALS.

5. IT IS NO SECRET THAT FRENCH LONG HAVE FELT THAT
SERIOUS PROBLEMS SHOULD BE HANDLED BY THOSE NATIONS
WHICH REALLY HOLD THE POWER TO DETERMINE THEIR OUTCOME.
THIS LAY BEHIND DE GAULLE'S PUSH IN LATE 50'S FOR

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7777
INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY
ALL EC CAPITALS 0020

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 04343

SECURITY "DIRECTORATE" AND WE HEARD ITS ECHOS MORE
RECENTLY WITHIN CONTEXT OF FRENCH APPROACH TO NATO
STANDARDIZATION (WHERE FRENCH MADE QUITE CLEAR THEIR
PREFERENCE TO FOCUS INITIAL STANDARDIZATION WORK WITHIN
SMALL GROUP COMPOSED OF NATO'S MAJOR ARMS PRODUCERS).
MOREOVER, EUROPEANS MUST ASK THEMSELVES HOW MOMENTUM
OF CONSTRUCTION OF EUROPE CAN BE MAINTAINED -- EVEN AT
ITS CURRENTLY FALTERING PACE -- WHILE EC IS STILL TRYING

TO DIGEST ITS ENLARGEMENT TO NINE NATIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD TO ITS POSSIBLE EXPANSION TO TEN, ELEVEN OR EVEN TWELVE FULL MEMBERS. EACH EXPANSION ADDS TO CENTRIFUGAL FORCES WITHIN EC AND PLACES ADDITIONAL BURDENS ON ITS EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP. WE IMAGINE THAT GISCARD AND SCHMIDT WILL DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT AT SOME LENGTH IN NICE AND THAT THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF FRENCH POLICY REGARDING THIS TRIAL BALLOON WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY AFFECTED BY SCHMIDT'S REACTION. MOREOVER, GISCARD'S PRESS CAMPAIGN PROBABLY REFLECTS HIS FEELING THAT FORTH-
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COMING EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG NEEDS TO FOCUS ON ISSUE OF FUTURE POLICY FOR STRENGTHENING EC EXECUTIVE IN CONTEXT BROADER THAN PROVIDED BY TINDEMANS REPORT.

6. WE HAVE COMMENTED BEFORE ON GISCARD'S TENDENCY TO LAUNCH FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES WITHOUT MUCH PREPARATION WITHIN OR OUTSIDE FRANCE. TIMING, SUBSTANCE AND FASHION OF LAUNCHING THIS TRIAL BALLOON MAY BE YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS PATTERN.
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